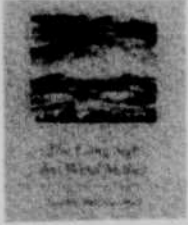


Stafford's poetry reveals lifelong vision of world



**The Long Sigh
the Wind Makes**
by
William Stafford

©1991
Available at the
University Bookstore

★★★

★ - Show it away, ★★ - a real disappointment,
★★★ - worth the time, ★★★★★ - a real page-turner

William Stafford is an older American who writes poetry embedded with wisdom and feeling. His thoughts are branches of reason and language, which evidence a natural freedom of place and person that manifest in his poems.

Stafford is no doctrinaire. *The Long Sigh the Wind Makes* is one of this year's collections of poems speaking of the people and planet with which we live.

The book is a thoughtful example of how the simplicities, joys and values in life can be abused.

Grey Elliot, who wrote of the introduction to the book, ends his contribution with a quote from his Native American neighbors. The selection is appropriate.

Stafford's poetry has a native voice that speaks directly and honestly. Nowhere in *The Long Sigh the Wind Makes* does Stafford diverge from the instilled messages that permeate a native, natural view of life.

In "Night In Oregon," "Over the Mountains," "That Day" and "Centering," Stafford speaks from an American landscape, whether it be physical or metaphysical. In "Old Growth," he speaks from his mind.

His political classification is seemingly non-existent in the sense that his poetry intends not to promote a product, ideal, or doctrine, but to mediate what it is to be a human being. The poems in *The Long Sigh the Wind Makes* voice wisdom, not cleverness.

Stafford's pace expresses neither feral nor chaotic structure. The pace is constant while Stafford pieces together understanding; the poetry resonates with steady consideration. His breaths are never examples of hyperventilation, but sighs.

Stafford is 77 years old and wakes each morning at 5 a.m. to walk, think and write. He has referred to his poetry as "Talk with a little luck."

As readers, we are fortunate to be able to read that "talk." In *The Long Sigh the Wind Makes*, we listen to an elder. We listen to the answer blowing in the wind. Good reading.

By J.D. Spencer
Emerald Contributor



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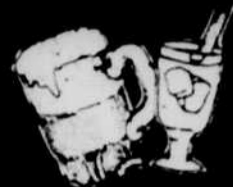
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